



Shawnigan FOCUS

"Our Voice - Our Thoughts - Our Community"

Lakeshore Devastation

by Dave Hutchinson

Residents along the West Arm were dismayed to see an excavator devastating a waterfront lot on Wylde Wood Avenue on November 3rd. It is clear that the machine removed vegetation and disturbed substantial amounts of soil all the way down to the water's edge. To top things off, a large machine-stacked burn pile was set alight providing nearby neighbours with a smoky haze for several days.

So what's wrong with this you ask? For decades it was the norm to alter your property as you liked and to have huge burn piles which were started with lots of diesel oil and old tires.

Times have changed though. Disturbing waterfront without a Development Permit or having colossal fires are now against the law. As the population grows there are simply too many of us to do as we please and common resources like water and air need to be protected.

Some violations are more brazen than others. The illegal logging on Worthington Point (discussed in previous issues) and the event depicted above are prime examples and warrant consequences. Smaller disturbances are commonplace and often tolerated. Bylaw enforcement is complaint driven. The CVRD states that their goal is voluntary compliance. It is an appalling system which sets neighbour against neighbour and results in inconsistent penalties. Many infractions are ignored or incur a trivial reprimand while others are severely dealt with.

A big problem is ignorance of

complex regulations. The waterfront related rules involve all three levels of government. Local bylaws reference provincial Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR), the Water Act, and the Fish Protection Act. The federal government comes into play with the Fisheries Act. There are requirements for a Qualified Environment Professional (QEP) to determine the Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA) on your property. It is all a bit overwhelming and needs to be simplified. No wonder people choose to ignore the rules.

One simple fact to remember is that you need to check with the local authorities for any work intended within 30 metres of the high water mark.

The BC Ministry of Environment produces a pamphlet which is a good reference guide. It is worth viewing on their web-site at: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/habitat/fish_protection_act/riparian/documents/RAR_Pamphlet.pdf. Local government would be well advised to send a copy of this pamphlet to every waterfront property owner on an annual basis.

As with the road-end issue described in last month's Focus, this is another example of a multi-jurisdictional problem that the CVRD does not effectively manage. Something

needs to be done to improve control at the local level.

Finally, with regard to big fires (again this is notorious for inconsistent enforcement) the following is from the CVRD website:

On August 12, 2009, the CVRD adopted Bylaw No. 2020 - Landclearing Management Regulation Bylaw, 2009. The purpose of the Bylaw is to improve local air quality by regulating the burning of large piles of debris, such as that undertaken during land-

clearing or development activities.

Effective immediately, pile-burning of all MACHINE-STACKED or CATEGORY 3 QUANTITIES of LAND-CLEARING DEBRIS is BANNED in all CVRD Electoral Areas (except Thetis Island). Landclearing debris must be chipped, ground or reused on site. If no suitable alternatives are available, landclearing debris may be burned ONLY with the use of an air curtain or trench burner.



Recent Lot Clearing on West Arm

Photo by Dave Hutchinson

A Shawnigan Lake Electoral Area All Candidates Meeting Held

by Graham Ross-Smith

An all candidates forum in the Hugh Wilkinson Theatre at Shawnigan Lake School was well attended on the evening of Thursday, November third. The event was sponsored and organized by the Shawnigan Residents Association with association director Al Brunet acting as moderator.

For the first part of the event the four candidates for electoral area director - Roy Davies, Kelly Musselwhite, Bruce Fraser and incumbent Ken Cossey - fielded many well-thought-out questions from a panel of six people, each representing a local community organization. Questions covered a wide range of topics such as CVRD support for the arts, protection of Shawnigan Lake and its watershed, parks and recreation, how the CVRD spends taxpayers' money, municipal status for Shawnigan, improving the business climate, clear-cut logging on watershed lands and the proposed location of the ecodpot recycling facility for the southern part of the Cowichan region. The second part of the meeting was opened up to questions from the audience.

The event was successful in that it gave those in attendance a chance to gain some knowledge of each candidate: their personality, their understanding of issues, their public speaking skills and their positions on matters of concern

to the electorate. Although the way each candidate handled questions reflected the differences among them in their past involvement in local issues and regional government, each displayed an ability to think on their feet and to give answers based on a reasonable analysis of the facts known to them.

For the most part, the evening could be characterized as a civil and thoughtful exchange of information between the candidates and Area B constituents. However, emotions did become heated towards the end of the event over the issue of the location of the Ecodpot. Voters will have an opportunity on November 19th to cast their votes on the issue of locating the facility at the proposed Cameron-Taggart location. Several people made the point that the non-binding referendum on the location issue is not sufficiently democratic and, therefore, the results should not be considered a valid guide to decision-making on the location issue.

The residents' association president, Garry Horwood, was very pleased with the event and felt that, in organizing the forum, the association had made a significant contribution to the life of the Shawnigan community. He expressed appreciation to all those who gave of their time and talents to make this event happen, with special thanks to Shawnigan Lake School for making the theatre available free of charge for the event.

2nd All Candidates Forum

By Lori Treloar

Residents on the north end of Area B hosted a very successful All Candidate Forum November 8th in their new community centre, "The Hub". The turnout was good and the tone was great. The Organizers were creative and provided the audience with an opportunity to get up-close and personal with each of the candidates. After opening remarks from each of the three remaining candidates, incumbent Ken Cossey, and challengers Bruce Fraser and Roy Davies, the audience was split into three groups. Each group met around a table in three corners of the gym and had roughly 20 minutes to sit with each candidate to ask questions, bounce ideas and chat about issues. This arrangement worked out very well. People who might not normally ask questions in a large group were at ease in this intimate setting and the candidates had the luxury of providing in-depth answers and answering follow-up questions. The evening ended with closing remarks from each candidate. It was a non-confrontational meeting and a lot of positive dialogue took place. Kudos to the organizers!

Having attended both All Candidates Meetings for Area B, I certainly see the value of providing both meeting styles during an election campaign and I hope that there will be more of these round table discussions in the future.

Final Words From The Candidates!



Bruce Fraser

This Election is About Representation and Trust

Area B has the largest population of any electoral area in British Columbia. It is currently represented by a single Area Director, also the poorest ratio of rural people to representative in the province. This presents huge problems for adequate governance. Added to this is the growing diversity of the Shawnigan region. From the Koksilah River communities of Cowichan Station in the north and Renfrew Road to the west, to the lake and village in the center, to the Cameron Taggart farms and forests in the east to the mountain villages of Malahat, Shawnigan Station and Elkington Forest in the south, Area B is rich in resources and social complexity. It is high time that these differing sub communities of our region were knitted together in common purpose.

Reflecting our diversity is the growing array of issues and the questions that they produce. Should we incorporate as a municipality, with what boundaries and at what cost? What will it take to ensure proper stewardship of our lake and its watershed? How do we enhance Shawnigan Village without forgetting the rest of our community? Will the new OCP foster the kind of development that will respect our rural lifestyle? How do we ensure an honoured and well-funded place for the arts in times of financial stress? How do we ensure that our quest for improved infrastructure does not displace young families and senior citizens from affordable housing? How can we avoid the kind of senseless conflict where local government is using public funds to thwart the clearly expressed concerns of a group of its own citizens?

It appears to me that the days are limited for the Regional District model of rural governance. We are more likely to be moving towards a group of collaborating municipalities. Each will have its unique character and together they will share the costs and site locations of facilities that take their combined resources. We do not need to be lumped together into a homogenized pool of dissimilar communities. Answers to the questions raised by the many issues that we face are best crafted by people for themselves, working with elected representatives who are dedicated to achieving a shared vision of the future. We need local government that is working for the expressed interests of people of the community - all of them!

A future governance structure that could achieve this quality of representation and responsiveness will take very wide participation and many hands. The teamwork that has become possible by the personal courage and ethical clarity of Kelly Musselwhite as she and I join forces for the Shawnigan communities is just the beginning.



Ken Cossey

RE-ELECT KEN COSSEY

As your current Electoral Area Director, I would like to state that it has been an honour and privilege to serve you and our community over the last six years.

We have completed many community related tasks and addressed many issues over the last six years. Some are highlighted below:

- Hiring Dr. Mazumder to continue with his baseline water quality review of Shawnigan Lake. I was able to get \$25,000 per year for the next five years allocated to this project
- The adoption of our new Official Community Plan. This new tool outlines our community development values
- The first Parks and Trails Master Plan for Shawnigan Lake. The purpose of this plan is to set priorities for our parks and trail system over the next 10 to 20 years. This plan also outlines ways to protect our lake and the watershed
- Completion of the Kinsol Trestle
- Laying out the foundation for a park system extending up from the Kinsol Trestle, along both sides of the Koksilah River to the old growth forest area on the banks of the Koksilah River
- Completion of the Phase 1 municipal Incorporation review
- Completion of an Arts and Culture task force report
- Re-development of the Shawnigan Hills sports field

I strongly believe in Community Empowerment and Partnerships as not one person or group can accomplish everything by themselves, as the community must take ownership and control of the issue or issues that need to be addressed. I see my task as the Director to ensure that the community groups are empowered; partnerships are developed and provided with the necessary tools to complete their tasks.

While I support becoming a municipality, the community needs to decide whether or not this is a good idea. I also support the concept of regional recreation. Did you know that approximately 47% of our users of the Shawnigan Lake Community Centre come from other parts of the Cowichan Valley? They contribute to the program costs but not to our capital costs. Even though I support these two concepts, I still need to bring information back to the community for discussion and community endorsed direction. I can not impose my own ideals as to whether or not it is good or bad idea, only the community has that right.

On November 19th I am asking for your support to be your Electoral Area Director.



Roy Davies

Vote, Vote, Vote! Tell your Friends, Tell your neighbors... Saturday November 19th is voting day.

I have lived in Shawnigan Lake all my life, and I have seen many changes and development over the years, but one thing that has not changed is our sense of community. Shawnigan Lake needs a voice that understands us, our history and our concerns. Shawnigan Lake needs someone connected to the community, its people and its businesses. Shawnigan Lake needs someone who is available, open and ready to listen.

I am this person and ask that you vote for me, Roy Davies November 19th.



Kelly Musselwhite

Life's Constant...Change...

My reasons for getting politically involved stemmed from the illegal placement of the Eco Depot on farmland and the infinite details surrounding this local catastrophe. Subsequently and unexpectedly, I became further awakened to a broader understanding: our local government was not doing their job.

Democracy is not the means of process at our current CVRD table. Debate and deliberation do not take place while autocracy is apparent. Citizens have been duped into believing their elected leaders represent their wishes and rights, yet the opposing reality is clear. Citizens' voices are being marginalized and placed secondary to the self-serving notions and agendas of their leaders.

I set out to seek change. We are all entitled to more.

My lessons throughout this experience have been many but one constant has always stood - I love Shawnigan Lake and the people who live here. I care about our future and sustaining the lifestyle we all rely on. This is my home and where I want my children to grow. This is where we choose to stay. I believe that from unlikely events we learn purpose. The All Candidate's Meeting of November 3 is one such example. Although it mirrored the format to which I am opposed at the CVRD Board, it nonetheless inspired me to understand and accept my own

shortcomings. Dr. Fraser's platform is very similar to mine; however, in addition to my desire and commitment he brings experience and a vast skill-set.

I realized that the candidate who ought to be supported to achieve much needed change is Dr. Bruce Fraser and it is my hope that those who supported me will continue to do so by voting for him.

My decision to endorse Dr. Fraser and step aside from my own campaign is embedded in integral and honourable reasons for which I am proud. In unity comes strength.

I admire Dr. Fraser and intend to work by his side over the coming years.

Together we are "Team Shawnigan" and together we will work to ensure the future of this community...and I will continue to learn...

Editor's note: According to Bruce Fraser, "Team Shawnigan is an enthusiastic way of telling people that Kelly and I have found common cause and that we both recognize that extensive participation and teamwork will be necessary to accomplish the aims expressed in our platforms."

FOCUS FEEDBACK

This is what our readers (some acknowledged, some anonymous) had to say...these are the opinions expressed by a variety of readers and not the editorial stance of the Shawnigan Focus team.

Beavers:

-Susanne Darby advised that, in the spring of this year, beavers have felled a tree a short distance along the path on the shoreline to the right of the observation deck/wharf in Old Mill Park.

-Beavers felled a good-sized willow tree last winter on a property on Kingsley Road.

Road Ends:

...I had no idea there were so many closed road ends. Thanks for the information.

...Having moved here a while back, I decided to drive all the roadways that supposedly go to the lake, only to find one...just one, on the west side that actually did so - it's called "Clearihue". I also noticed that the locals have put address numbers on the trees, as well as signs of all sorts, leading one to believe that the actual roads were driveways to homes. (naturally, you would not drive it)

...The idea that they can put wharves on public land is ridiculous and they are throwing their money into the pot (a gamble) like they are sure it will go un-noticed - it makes it squatting...plain and simple. It should be discontinued and the roadways cleared...they should be given notice that the wharves will be removed unless they wish to donate them to the public whose land they have attached them to. And, why not? It's everyone's lake, the roads do not belong to them either, etc.

...I was very disappointed I could not take my dogs down to the lake a mere block or two from my home... I have to drive all the way to the polluted beach (been there on a hot day? the stench is very noticeable)

see "Feedback" page 3

We encourage you to send us letters...

The Focus will publish your thoughts on Shawnigan issues; bouquets you would like to offer to special people; things that strike you funny; challenges you want our civic leaders to consider; and/or ideas that would better our community. Letters to the Editor must be accompanied by the author's name, address and phone number, but the contact information will not be published. Letters should be limited to 250 words and we reserve the right to edit for brevity or to refuse inappropriate or abusive language. Send them to: editor@shawniganfocus.ca

Who cares about local politics!?

I was in line for a coffee and asked the guy in front of me if he had a favourite in the upcoming election. "Look" he said. "I just moved my wife and kids here two years ago. We work in Victoria and have nothing to do with Shawnigan. I couldn't give a crap about local politics!"

So, here is a guy with kids who needs school, daycare and activities to keep them out of trouble. He drives a car, uses local roads and pays taxes for both. His house needs fire protection, and like it or not, he drinks lake water and if he has a hoodlum problem, he will call the local police.

Add to that the fact that he has invested several hundred thousand dollars to live here . . . and, what? . . . he wants to leave his investment in the hands of just anybody that comes along. He doesn't want a say in any of these choices?

This guy is either naïve or nuts!

The smart money says that he had better start "caring" very soon before his water turns bad along with his kids and his investment in his house! (voting won't guarantee that his wife won't leave him)

I urge you all to get to know the candidates and get out and vote. Al

Holding Back?

As a former political supporter of our area director, I take great exception to Mr. Cossey's claim that "it is incredibly disingenuous to accuse the CVRD of misrepresenting the facts" with regard to the proposed South Cowichan waste transfer station (incredibly green-washed as an 'ECO Depot'). Though having been actively involved in the 'fight' against the site location during the last 18 months, I have refrained from writing to the press preferring instead to work towards a respectful and negotiated solution. I was appointed by the CVRD to the ECO Depot Neighbourhood Advisory Group charged with reviewing the social, environmental, and traffic impact studies. The CVRD always maintained that if there were location problems identified by these studies they would not continue with the project. When the reports were finally prepared further 'green washing' was found throughout. I subsequently contacted colleagues at UVic's law faculty who referred me to a well-known expert to give his independent opinion of the CVRD impact reports. His conclusions discredited these reports and advised that they could not be considered either as proper social or environmental impact studies (having ignored many serious questions). Furthermore, the Ministry of Highways has still not signed-off on this proposed project (and the exorbitant costs of realigning Cameron-Taggart Road not factored into the CVRD's projected costs) and the Archeology Branch still requires further impact assessment on adjacent proper-

ties (particularly the land encompassed by a new traffic-controlled intersection on the Shawnigan-Cobble Hill Road). The truth of the Eco Depot is that costs continue to climb dramatically, taxes are increasing, and Ken Cossey continues to tell only half the story spun by a Victoria PR firm. On November 19th, please VOTE NO in the ECO Depot referendum and support candidates who will ensure a transparent and trustworthy approach to local governance.

Dr. D. Marshall

Save the Farm!

I would like to set the record straight. While I am glad to read in recent news media that Ken Cossey believes that the CVRD is accountable for the information it conveys, in truth, I and my family have not found Mr. Cossey to be at all accountable!

Before we sold our Dad's old family farmlands to the CVRD we asked one final question: "Is there any chance that a waste transfer station could be built here?" Absolutely not was the reply since it is (and still is) zoned as agricultural land. On this basis we agreed to sell and just two weeks later the Eco Depot was announced! My family are of the belief that our Dad's land was purchased in a most under-handed way and evidence of a CVRD board gone wrong and desperate to spin half truths to remain in power.

This location is simply wrong. On November 19th, please help us save our Dad's old family farmlands and vote no in the Eco Depot referendum. Yours sincerely, Judy

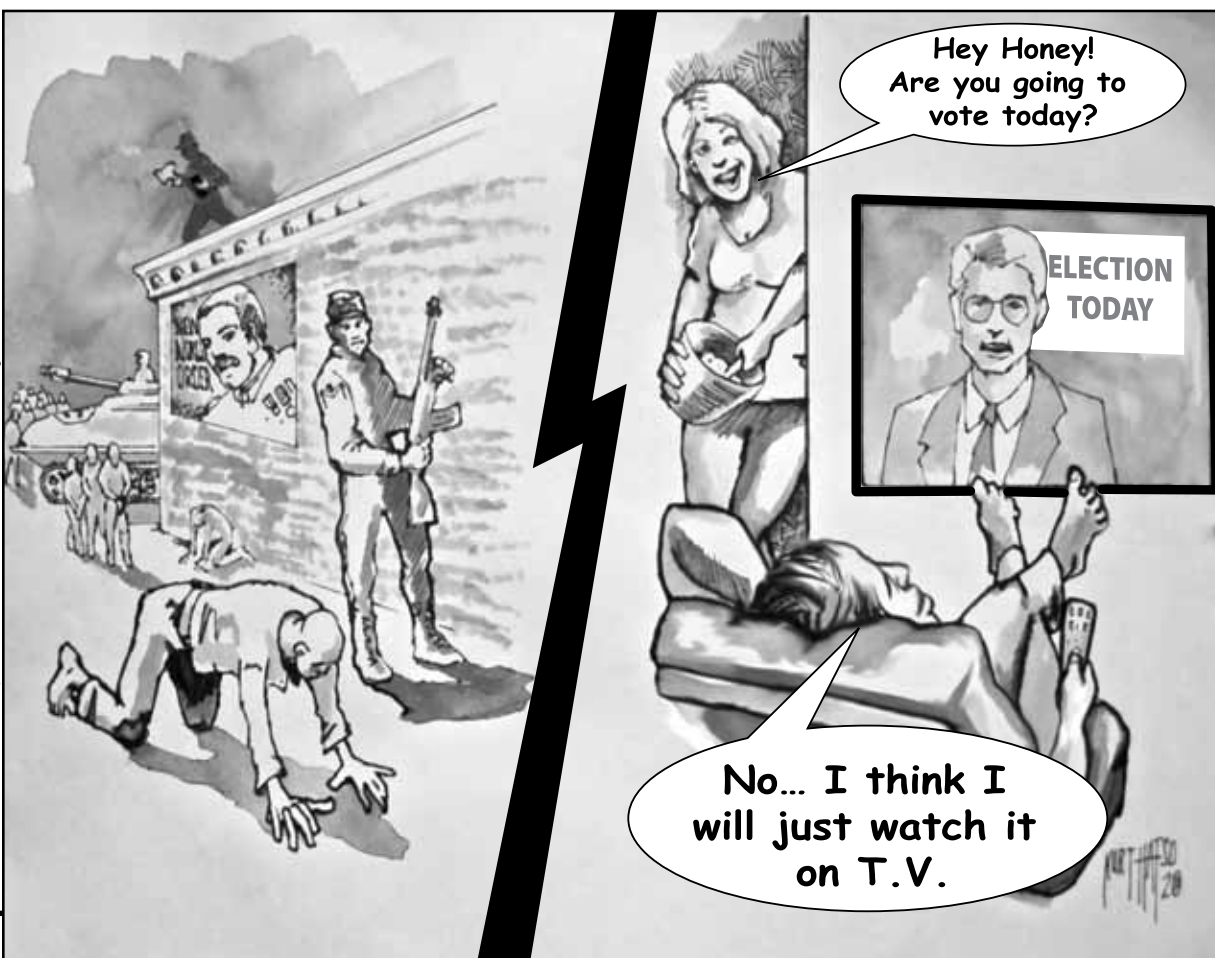
Opposition

I am pleased to see even more growing opposition to the proposed location of the Eco Depot in tranquil, rolling farmland. What a stupid and costly idea this was!

What is absolutely shocking and unacceptable to me is the utter recalcitrance of Ken Cossey, Gerry Giles and others to consider a move to a much more appropriate area. Valley View Centre is the logical location; there is oodles of room, there are already three recycling boxes there, and Valley View is convenient to all of us in South Cowichan. The trucks are already at a highway, so the countryside can remain tranquil.

We do NOT use Bing's Creek but instead use either the new private facility on the West Shawnigan Road or the old Harpers (now Steel Pacific) at the entry to Duncan. Almost everything we might want to dump there is FREE. For yard waste we can go to Island Landscape on Fisher Road

I object to the heavy-handed misuse of our tax dollars, without our permission, to mount an expensive, \$50,000 media propaganda campaign to present the Eco Depot as a fait accompli. We are told that it is just us, "the taxpayers", that "don't seem to understand"! Oh, we understand all



right and will not be dictated to by a Board that increasingly holds its meetings in-camera. The staff at the CVRD is capable of researching sites, we do not need an unauthorized \$150,000 outside "study". We could have put the \$200,000. saved to road paving in Area B

Did you know that the family who sold to the CVRD tried to get the land back, but was refused?? More pig-headedness on the part of the Area A, B, and C directors.

One last point: This Eco Depot would be in bylaw violation. A "utility" is a hydro substation, natural gas distribution hub or water tower etc. If the CVRD thinks it can circumvent the intent or wording wring of this law, then maybe we, the people, should feel free to rezone or build as we see fit. For those residents of other Areas, you are next in the sights of this out of control Board.

I think that we need a complete sweep of new directors in areas A, B and C. Area B in particular is seriously lacking in its updating or paving of smaller roads in our area (although Area C has managed to grab enough provincial dollars to not only pave roads in Area C but even repave some; but has other problems that affect the taxpayer.) Be sure to learn about the new candidates, and elect them on November 19th. Please vote NO to the referendum.

Anne

"Feedback" from page 2

across from Masons (been that way for years) only to find a sign that says NO DOGS. Each park/beach in the summer has signs that say NO DOGS. (Dogs are not the issue here - people are).

...People here want the way of life, they are used to... to continue as it has been - it's an obvious conclusion - so we should be taking care to make sure that happens, by not allowing people to do arbitrary things that will ruin it for all, would be a start. (this leads to more rules and regulations that need to be enforced leading to funds being lost and negative attention drawn).

...I live on a "road allowance" which leads to an undeveloped road end. It is without a doubt the most disgusting eye sore on the perimeter of

Shawnigan Lake. It has no less than 3 docks, one of which is 1/2 submerged, rotten and literally decaying. The debris field is no less than 150 feet. Safety issues are countless. Broken glass, near empty fuel cans, rusting tools, beer bottles/cans, cigarettes, rotten towels/blankets/life jackets, dangerous tangled twisted ropes and tons of other garbage litter the water and surrounding waterfront. If you can believe this: they dropped a car engine in the water a few years ago to use as an anchor for their boats and docks! Pollution is an understatement. This year they dropped cement blocks for additional anchorage. Every year it gets worse and confrontations have occurred. I have cleaned it up more than once but have all but given up. The young men responsible for this atrocity party here regularly, use extremely foul language, and are very loud. I haven't enjoyed this beautiful "public access" once as a result of their encroachment and have asked the people responsible on numerous occasions to at least clean up. I feel as though My family and our dogs will never be able to enjoy it unless someone takes a stand and makes change.

...I'd be happier if our road allowance was a fraction as nice as the ones in your article but ultimately would like it to be free of docks, boats, dangerous walkways and be used for what they were designed: public access for the entire neighborhood - not free waterfront property for one or two people to do with as they wish without any recourse.

...living in Shawnigan for 22 years this is one of the big sore spots about the lake. People that think they own the lakefront at the end of the road they live on. I think all open road ends to the lake should be marked for public use since we all pay the taxes. If docks have been built they should be open to public use as well. We are no longer a small area with a small population and this needs to be addressed as soon as possible. The shoreline of this lake is public property and should be treated as such. James Goreas

Bench dedication ceremony for Gerry Odegaard

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Museum Crow


Unfortunately, the missing crow has not been returned. Fortunately, a replacement crow was created and now flies on the Museum milepost.



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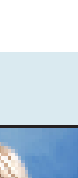
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The Wild Side

Views from a Kayak

By Ros Cuthbert

If you manage to get out on the lake early enough in the summer, you see all sorts of interesting residents, and I am not talking about the people out enjoying themselves.

This summer was late getting started but as the weather warmed out came the turtles. For many years, I had maintained that all the turtles in the lake had been deposited by thoughtless tired owners but after a bit of investigating I found that we have two kinds of turtles, the native Western Painted Turtle and that uppity interloper the Red-eared Slider Turtle. The Red-eared Slider is native only to the Southern United States but has bullied its way into many lakes and ponds across Canada without benefit of passport or invitation. The presence of the Red-eared Sliders is evidence of my

aforementioned Bad-Pet-Owner dumping. I myself have seen this swaggering poseur, with its tell-tale red stripes down the sides of its head sunning itself on my docks walkway, the nerve! The cheek! Far too brash for my tastes.

On the other hand is our own charming and delightfully designed Western Painted Turtle. This lovely native has no need to have its beauty plastered down the side of its head. Instead, its spectacular coloured underside in orange, green, and yellow swirling patterns is for the most part hidden from view. We have witnessed one laying eggs in a small sandy patch of beach on the West Arm. The pointy log near the Worthington property also has a resident Western Painted. The end of the West Arm seems to have a population of at least a dozen turtles.

Both turtles compete for the same food sources, starting out as more of a carnivore dining on snails, tadpoles, worms, frogs, even carrion, then moving on to being more of a herbivore as they mature. All the turtles hibernate in the mud as the temperatures drop and return as temperatures rise in the spring.

As I was researching the habits of our dear Western Painted I used the site BCREPTILES.ca to find out

the history of the Shawnigan Lake Western Painted Turtles.

Towards the end of the article it stated that though native to the interior of BC, there were pockets of them on the lower mainland and Southern Vancouver Island, possibly brought to the coast by some long ago unthinking souls. Suddenly, I was taken back more than fifty years to when our family holidayed in the Okanagan. We camped in Penticton where our campground had the most mar-

vellous slough, full of sunfish, carp, gigantic tadpoles and turtles - Western Painted Turtles.

My brother was always rather a good entrepreneur

and while we splashed in the lake, he was out picking peaches or had some scheme



or another going on to make money in his spare time. This one particular year we arrived home and found out he had "borrowed" my baby brother's plastic bath and had secreted away about a dozen turtles in the trunk of the car which miraculously survived the journey back to the Island. Mother was furious, as the turtles were now in our plastic pool. My brother assured her they would be in a good home by the afternoon and, true to his word, they were. Always thinking of the financial angle he had already arranged to sell them to a small local zoo. My brother's animal smuggling days are long over, and the zoo long gone, but I wondered where all those turtles went when the zoo closed. My sanctimonious self is wracked with guilt. Is my family responsible for the Shawnigan Western Painteds?...at least they were Canadian.

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Shawnigan Lake School International Week

By Kelly Koepp

From November 21st to 26th, Shawnigan Lake School will celebrate multiculturalism and the traditions of more than 40 countries of the world with its 9th International Week Festival.

International Week at Shawnigan started as a brainwave of the Modern Languages Department in the late 1980s and grew to become a School-wide event under the direction of long-time French teacher Elizabeth Leary. The idea at the time was to showcase some of the unique, cultural aspects of Shawnigan's international students, and build community recognition for the richly diverse cultures represented at the School. This community undertaking, which requires the skills and energy of nearly every single person on campus, was such a great success that it continues to be held on a regular basis approximately every three years.

Vancouver native, Vivian Braithwaite, who embraces her mixed Chinese and Pakistani heritage, appreciates the message of International Week. "Although we talk about our multicultural environment all the time we don't really appreciate how many cultures are present on campus until we experience International Week. It is a good reminder that we all have something to learn from each other as well as something to offer."

The build-up to this year's International Week begins well in advance. Staff members head-up specific country committees while students are encouraged to select a country with which they have a connection. This year's smallest delegation is India and Pakistan with six representatives, just ahead of Japan with eight. At the other end of the spectrum, China and Hong Kong have 61 delegates followed by Germany with 41 representatives.

The festivities will kick off with the International Food Fair, which is both a logistical feat and an absolute highlight. In the weeks leading up to the open-

ing event, the Shawnigan kitchen staff has the difficult task of procuring specialty ingredients and tools to facilitate the cooking needs for each country. Some past requests have been an entire lamb and roasting spit for Greece or a particularly rare jam from Iceland. The major coordination happens when each delegation begins to prepare 400-500 morsels to serve at the same time.

The schedule for the week has remained largely unchanged over the years. The program includes the Food Fair where countries showcase indigenous cuisine; the Multi-Faith Chapel Service with prayers and readings in native languages from different faiths and a candle-light vigil with the Prayer for World Peace; the Stage Show where countries offer unique music or dance performances; and a mix of games and workshops attended by the entire student body to complement a fun-filled week of celebration and appreciation. The 2011 program will also introduce an afternoon of international sport.

Danny Hamstra, a Duncan resident with German heritage, is excited to celebrate his second International Week at Shawnigan. "International Week was fantastic the first time around but I'm really looking forward to getting involved as much as possible this time, especially since it is my graduating year and a nice surprise to do it all again. Plus, there is a new sports event that I didn't experience before and of course the Food Fair and Stage Show... basically I'm looking forward to it all!"

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Finding Home in Culture and Community

By Jude Wong

Upon coming home to the Island after several years in the Yukon, I have been moved by its lush, green landscapes and by the incredible growth of the Island into such a holistic, vibrant and multicultural community.

It was then fitting for me to walk into the new studio space of MoonDance Dynamic Arts School (MoonDance) in Shawnigan Lake and see a community art collage on the wall, with the question "What is home?" in large letters across the top of the canvas.

With an extensive background of dance training, MoonDance owner and operator Lynn Weaver's passion is travel, which facilitates her devoted exploration of Cultural Dance. Weaver moved to the Island in 1999, returning to Canada after a long stint in Australia, and has been creating, performing and coordinating classes here ever since.

In 2002, she began working with internationally renowned musician, composer and choreographer Aboubacar Camara, a native of West Africa's province of Guinea. In 2005, Camara took Weaver and her husband Byron to his home village, beginning a long-term relationship of exchange and appreciation with the people there.

After touring his work in Africa, Europe and across

Canada, Camara has now also returned to the Valley to continue his art form and invest in the new sense of home he feels here. He teaches what he learned from his grandmother and their village back in Guinea; what is there, a common everyday practice, he brings here, as a new experience of connection.

Although my own ethnic origins lie far from Africa, I have always found a sense of home in its music and dancing. Maybe it's because these ancient practices reflect a universal past time of ceremony, celebration and wordless connection. When I participate, I feel grounded and reassured, connected to something timeless that transcends age, race, religion and class.

When I asked Camara about his art form, he said, "Making music and dancing makes people happy; it brings everyone back to connecting with each other and remembering the things that are truly important in this life. You can't just work; you have to enjoy yourself! You can make yourself happy without anything in your hands."

When I asked him about MoonDance, he said, "Lynn and Byron care about people. They place heart and the preservation of culture over business."

From Weaver, "Every instance

of learning dance from other cultures involves an inherent respect for the people of that culture. Each person who participates in such dances contributes to the preservation of multicultural life on this planet."

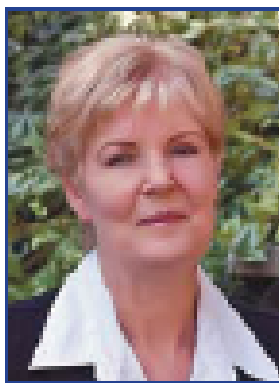
In January of this year, with incredible support from the Shawnigan Lake community, Lynn and Byron opened their new studio space, the Art House. In its 11 years of operation, MoonDance has also grown to include an impressive roster of accomplished instructors from Guinea, Vancouver and the Island offering classes for all ages including West African dance and music, Flamenco, Middle Eastern and Contemporary dance; Yoga, Chanting Circle and monthly film and book studies.

MoonDance, like the Island, is an international home for cultural expression, connection and dialogue. One way or another, we have all found home here. For class information and online registration, visit www.MoonDancearts.ca

Jude Wong has many dancing pastimes here on the Island, in Vancouver and the Yukon. Visit her blog at www.gapping.wordpress.com or email her at jude_wong@ymail.com.



Shawnigan Lake



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Shawnigan Lake Parks Commission

by Margaret Symon

The Area B Parks and Recreation Commission recently brought your attention to a key Parks and Trails Master Planning recommendation to acquire some or all of the undeveloped road ends that abut Shawnigan Lake, for the purpose of developing some as public accesses to the lake.

Another key recommendation contained in the Master Plan concerns the need to expand and enhance trail connectivity. While we are fortunate at Shawnigan to have a number of designated park trails, it became apparent during the Master Planning process that the public would like to see more trails for walking, hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. A connecting trail network would increase public safety by taking trail users off busy roads, encourage better health and fitness, and enhance local tourist attractions, like the Kinsol Trestle.

Recent rehabilitation of the Kinsol Trestle has seen a surge in visits to the historic structure spanning the Koksilah River. Shawnigan Lake directly benefits recreationally, socially, and economically from the Kinsol Trestle and TransCanada Trail connection leading to the trestle. The Shawnigan Parks and Trails Master Plan recommends improving community access to the TransCanada Trail and Cowichan Valley Trail through integration of the Shawnigan Lake community trails network.

The Baldy Mountain Trail is in need of maintenance, but prior to such work being undertaken, the Master Plan recommends key portions of Old

Baldy Mountain need to be secured to protect the mountain's sensitive ecosystems and recreational resources.

The Master Plan recommends a multi-use trail/trail connection between Mason's Beach Park and Shawnigan Wharf Park along the rail corridor. Mason's Beach and Shawnigan Wharf Park are two important community park destinations for residents. The establishment of a rail/trail between these two park sites along the rail corridor is important, with expanded connection opportunities to the village core. An additional trail connection is recommended from Dougan Park to the proposed waterfront rail trail. Together with these trail developments, shoreline improvements are recommended to enhance Shawnigan Wharf Park.

Improvement and extension of the Silvermine Trail to connect Shawnigan Lake/Cobble Hill Road through to the Koksilah River is another goal. The 4-km portion of the Silvermine Trail connecting Silvermine Estates and Shawnigan Beach Estates has recently been completed. This trail should be continued west towards the Kinsol Trestle and the TransCanada Trail through negotiations with landowners along the proposed route.

Margaret is the Chair of Area B Parks and Recreation



Margaret Symon

Shawnigan Lake Residents Association (SRA)

By Graham Ross-Smith

Shawnigan Residents Association (SRA) AGM By Graham Ross-Smith The Shawnigan Community Centre hosted the Shawnigan Residents Associations AGM on Oct. 15. Among other things on the agenda was the election of a new Board of Directors. Remaining on the board were Al Brunet, Calvin Cook, Garry Horwood, Craig Mearns, Graham Ross-Smith and Wendy Woollven. Newly elected members were Grant Price, Dewar McCarthy and Gaileen Flaman. Lynne Upton, Tim Parker and James McKenzie retired from the board.

The highlight of the event was a presentation by guest speaker Mayor John Ranns of Metchosis. Mayor Ranns was invited to speak because of the strong interest locally in becoming a municipality instead of an electoral district. The title of his talk was "Operating a Small Municipality." Metchosis's population at the last census (2009) was 5043 and it is projected to increase by only 257 by 2016.

With the majority of Metchosis residents voting in favour of incorporation in 1984, Metchosis finally became a municipality. The voters of the area, including John Ranns, had turned down three earlier referenda on incorporation. The Mayor now firmly believes that incorporation was the right way to go and that, had the area not done so, it would be a very different place for the worse today; the

chief difference being that it probably would have lost much, if not all, of its rural character. It is abundantly clear from the District of Metchosis's official community plan (OCP) that staying rural is the most fundamental desire of the residents of this beautiful community. Mayor Ranns described Metchosis as a "lifestyle" municipality. He commented that many of the land developers with projects in Langford and other rapidly growing municipalities of Greater Victoria prefer, ironically, to live in Metchosis.

The Metchosis OCP seems to have taken on an almost sacred status because of its strong stance on protecting the community's rural values; the wish of the people for a low-density, rural-agricultural community. Despite the changes in the composition of the municipal council since incorporation, the OCP's clear goal of maintaining the rural character and integrity of Metchosis has kept local government policies and by-laws from straying from that goal. For example, not a single parcel of land has been rezoned since incorporation, and the population size has increased only modestly: well below the projected increases.

Mayor Ranns also addressed the popular belief that becoming a municipality would be expensive for taxpayers. While this is often the case, especially for municipalities keen on growth and development, it has

not really been the case for Metchosis. By staying rural, moving slowly and by keeping bureaucracy small in size, the cost of operating his municipality has been relatively modest. The municipal hall has only five full-time staff. Work not handled by them is contracted out to people in the Capital Region who have the required expertise and who undertake the work on a part-time basis. Even that very expensive function of building and maintaining roads is contracted out to local companies. The outcome is that Metchosis has no municipal debt and even has funds in reserve for municipal projects.

Those in attendance at the AGM asked a number of excellent questions of the Mayor and, on the whole, appeared to appreciate the information that Mayor Ranns provided in his answers and throughout his presentation. It was clear to the audience by the end of the meeting that it is incorrect to assume that by becoming a municipality that taxpayer costs would automatically skyrocket. Metchosis has proven that it might indeed cost a little bit more, but the benefits of being able to better control our own community destiny are so great that a modest increase in taxes is justified and probably bearable.

Links:

www.district.metchosis.bc.ca
shawniganresidentsassociation.com

South Cowichan's Eco Depot: The facts

Community recycling centre on Cameron Taggart Rd?
☒ **Vote on November 19th**
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The proposed South Cowichan Eco Depot will be set well off the road in the forested area of the site – not on farmland, not in hay fields, and not within view, as some people are saying. The Eco Depot will be situated on a rocky bluff that has been quarried and logged – but never farmed.

South Cowichan's Eco Depot is a community friendly residential recycling and waste collection facility. It is not a dump. All materials collected at the site will be properly managed and taken off site. The Eco Depot will also feature an Environmental Education Centre, Community Bottle Drive building and Free Store.

See for yourself: walk up the driveway at 3224 Cameron Taggart Road and stand in the middle of the forest. Or call us to arrange a site tour at 250-746-2500.

ecodepotfacts.ca

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Yoga to Beat the Winter Blues

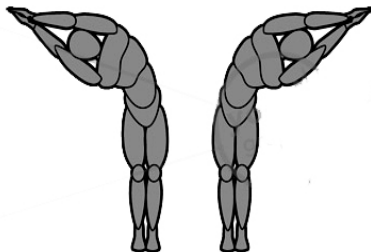
By Nicola Cusi

In recent years, doctors have increasingly focused their efforts in treating depression on changing the biochemistry of the brain, specifically by using drugs to raise the levels of neurotransmitters such as serotonin. This is the mechanism of action of the most commonly prescribed antidepressants, the so-called selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) such as Prozac, Paxil, and Zoloft. While there are many times when these medications may be necessary, or even life saving, it's well known that exercise is a valuable tool to raise levels of serotonin and other neurotransmitters and help balancing our brain chemistry. But Yoga offers more than exercise: It can not only help to raise energy and lift you out of depression but to quiet their restless minds, put you in touch with their deeper purpose in life, and connect you with an inner source of calm and joy that yoga insists is your birthright.

From a yogic perspective, people with depression lack life force or prana. You'll want to concentrate on practices that bring breath to the body. If you are able to tolerate them, vigorous practices such as repeated Sun Salutations (Surya Namaskar), arm balances, and other challenging poses can be therapeutic. Backbends, in particular, can be stimulating and invigorating. Focusing on posture, gradually increasing core strength to be able to open the chest and breath deeply can be a transforming experience.

The difficulty is often finding the energy to go to the Yoga class. Find a friend, get a group together to call and motivate each other and if it helps follow up with a walk or coffee after the Yoga class. Be assured, you are not the only one in your neighbourhood that suffers from the winter blues! Finding social connections to talk about how you feel is as therapeutic as the physical exercise!

Nicola owns and operates KaliYoga Studio in Shawnigan Lake Village- www.kaliyoga.ca



MUSEUM MUSE

"Community"

by Lori Treloar

The seeds of the "community" of Shawnigan Lake can arguably be traced to 1893 when the Shawnigan Lake Lumber Company built an open air dance platform at the north end of the lake for local dances. True, one hotel and a mill existed prior to that year but the formation of a viable community did not begin immediately. The early population of Shawnigan was very diverse, yet the people – rough loggers, mill workers, settlers, hotel owners and British upper class – all contributed to the foundation of a strong and vital community.



Employees of the Shawnigan Lake Lumber Company were an integral part of the social and economic growth of the emerging community. In addition to their logging and sawmilling activities, they participated in the development of Shawnigan in many ways. Many employees built houses in the area and became permanent residents. The mill operated a store (1911-1935) which was available to area residents; the employees formed sports teams to challenge local residents; mill employees helped build churches in the neighbourhood; they responded to fires outside of the mill site; cleared snow covered roads; held regular dances and generally spent their earnings in the community. Owners of the mill were active as well. Under the management of "Pop" Elford, the mill often helped early settlers by accepting beef and other farm goods, in exchange for lumber.

Owners sat on committees that addressed the social and structural issues

of Shawnigan. They held dances and picnics that included local residents. They also initiated the clean up of the lake, and outlet, after years of accumulated debris from the logging/sawmilling activity.

In the mid 1940s, fire destroyed the mill for the third time and it was not rebuilt. Fortunately, the old mill site has been preserved as a beautiful lakeside park. Although it is now difficult to imagine that there was ever a large mill on the site, "Old Mill Park" provides us with an enduring legacy of Shawnigan's industrial heritage.

It seems that history doesn't just repeat itself - the same issues that we are still discussing today have been important to generations of Shawnigan residents – job opportunities, water quality, amenities and businesses to enable us to "live" locally, recreation and social facilities,

snow removal and sustainable agriculture. Sometimes we need to look backward to move forward.

The Shawnigan Lake Museum celebrates the history of Shawnigan Lake and Area B. The Historical Society, incorporated in 1977, has operated the museum since 1983. Our community has a great "story". If you have information, stories, pictures or artifacts that you can share with the Historical Society, contact shawniganlake-museum@shaw.ca At this time of year, the museum is open Friday through Sunday Noon-4.

"This is a Paid Advertisement by the Bruce Fraser Election Campaign".

Let's Talk Democracy

by Bruce Fraser

In our form of representative democracy, those elected by due process earn the right and responsibility to make decisions in the public interest on behalf of all. In normal circumstances we work by majority rule both to elect representatives and for them to make group decisions, regardless of the proportion of the eligible population that actually employs their franchise. For the most part this works tolerably well except when the majority is wrong.

That a majority of voters or decision makers can make mistakes should not come as a huge surprise. Sometimes this can occur because of lack of full information. It can occur because of discrimination, prejudice or corruption. It can occur because circumstances change to make a decision obsolete. A decision seen to be appropriate one day can appear later to have been incorrect or damaging.

Fortunately, in our society, we have numerous safeguards to make redress or create balance when the simple rule of the majority misfires. We have a Charter of Rights and Freedoms, courts of law, an ombudsman, appeal tribunals, human rights legislation, minority language laws, anti-discrimination laws, expropriation compensation rules, independent auditors, and a host of non-government organizations that champion the interests of minority groups.

In the past, majority governance has prevented women from voting, treated Chinese labourers badly, incarcerated Japanese Canadians, pushed First Nations people off their traditional lands and forced their children into abusive residential schools. We have forbidden gay people to marry or receive the due considerations of legal partnership. We have flooded fertile valleys, built subdivisions on prime farmland and filled the atmosphere with greenhouse gases. We have purchased submarines that don't work. We have permitted leaders to aid the concentration of wealth among the very few. In most cases we have eventually realized that these were mistakes. We have changed laws, compensated people, cut our losses, reversed decisions, apologized to people, removed barriers, allowed peaceful demonstrations and entrenched minority rights to protect people from the consequences of the majority being wrong.

A mature democracy anticipates that majority rule needs a lot of balance mechanisms and careful redress of mistakes to make the system fair. That's what is needed here in the conflicts over the Eco-Depot location decision in the CVRD. It is not enough to state that a non-binding referendum, decided by a majority, is sufficient. It may be useful as a guide, but a majority decision based on what amounts to an opinion poll– yes or no to a single location of a public facility with no competing alternatives– could still actually turn out to be wrong, unfair or damaging to a minority. We run the risk of adhering to a simple form of majority rule without taking notice of the substance of what is being decided and thus not being thoughtful enough about the inequitable consequences. Let's fix this mistake and move on. We have to employ our mature form of democracy to do this, not abandon it to black and white choices that are too simple to reflect a more complex reality.

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Shawnigan Lake RCMP Detachment

By Sergeant R.E. (Rob) Webb



Shawnigan Lake RCMP have worked with various groups over the past several months to bring about what we hope is safe and positive change to road areas of concern. We are pleased to see the modifications in place, especially the Valley View intersection. We will continue to work with and listen to your concerns regarding problem areas and aggressive driving.

The increased summer enforcement on the Malahat was well received from the majority of the public. Unfortunately, we will never be able to have zero accidents. Ways that we can collectively reduce accidents include starting with ourselves. I cannot speak for everyone but life seems to be getting busier and most of us seem in a rush. I am far from a traffic expert but we would all be much safer when driving if we slowed down, paid attention, and stayed off our cell phone while driving - talking or texting.

A recent trend we have seen locally as well is several accidents caused by medical conditions, specifically from diabetics. This is not meant to “target” diabetics just bring awareness to everyone. The awareness being that, regardless if you have a medical condition or not, if you are not feeling well or unsure, pull over, seek help and or rest before proceeding safely.

As a result of recent tragedies at Valley View, the Malahat and elsewhere we are seeing a significant increase in people reporting drivers for various offences. We won’t and can’t catch everyone - just know that when it is you that gets pulled over and receives a traffic violation, you have been warned.

When I began writing this I had hoped to bring a lighter side to the article as they are typically more enjoyable to read but could not. No one, including those of us who are paid well to attend these crashes, the numerous volunteers and the witnesses or the victims of these crashes, whose lives are changed forever, see the lighter side of these tragedies.

Sergeant Webb is the Detachment Commander at Shawnigan Lake

Beware - It Happens at Shawnigan Too...

On Nov 12/2011, just after midnight, Dennis (Security at Shawnigan School) got a call informing him that an intruder was rifling vehicles on the school grounds. The intruder was an 18-19 years old, white male with dirty blond hair. The intruder took off and dropped stuff that he had taken from some vehicles. He ran towards the front gate. Police were called out and they gave a police file number for anyone who is missing stuff from their vehicles. Police file number: 2011-3287. Please check to see if you are missing anything as we know of six vehicles that the intruder was in.

This is one of a number of several recent incidents in the area. Although it might seem less important, a fully loaded apple tree on one of the waterfront properties was recently stripped completely. The brazen perpetrator had to have accessed the property by water. It would have taken a good amount time for the apples to be picked.

In another report, a set of deck furniture was recently taken from a homeowner’s dock on the east side.

A small rowboat that was chained to a different dock was also taken.

“Odegaard”continued from page 4

when Dad was a volunteer firefighter. Many times when the alarm went off you would see Dad fly through the front doors of the store to the hall just across the street. I remember Halloween when the Fire Department always gave free hotdogs and beverages and had a huge bonfire with lots of fireworks. A fun time was always had by all.

From this spot you could stand and watch the Kiddies Carnival Parade go by and end up at Elsie Miles School. What memories there are of the things this community has done together; hanging out with friends on the porch of the store, the old church where we went to Sunday School, got married and then christened our own children.

Most importantly, this bench faces the store that Dad loved so much. He looked forward to coming to the store every day. He loved his work, the staff and his customers. As you sit here on the bench, look over to the store and remember him smiling, waving and talking to people as he was sweeping the porch. Now please join us on that porch for beverages and cookies. Thanks again to all of you.



Lunch - 11:30am
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SANTA RUN

The Shawnigan Lake Volunteer Fire Department presents its annual

Santa Run
Wednesday, December 22nd - 6 pm to 9 pm

Santa visits the Beach Estates starting at Ceylon Road, making his way to Linden Lane.

On the East side, Santa starts in the Village, down to Wallbank Road, south to Galland Road, then north to the Burnham Park area.

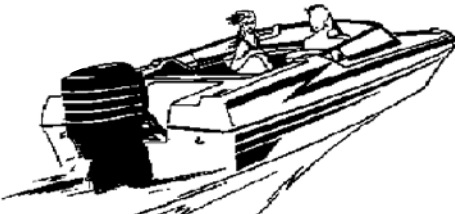
Shawnigan Lake Volunteer Fire Department


The callouts for the Fire Department for October are:
Oct 1 - First Responder call off Deloume Road
Oct 11 - First Responder call in the village
Oct 14 - First Responder call south of the village
Oct 15 - First Responder call in the Beach Estates
Oct 15 - Auto Alarm on West Shawnigan Lake Road
Oct 17 - First Responder call in the Beach Estates
Oct 22 - Possible Structure Fire off Filgate Road
Oct 30 - First Responder call on Renfrew Road

Shawnigan Weather for October 2011 (stats courtesy of UVic Weather Network) compiled by Grant Treloar					
	Shawnigan Normal	Cigarmaker's Bay	Discovery School	Museum	Kelsey School
Avg High	14.0	13.1	13.2	14.3	13.8
Avg Low	5.7	5.8	4.7	5.9	5.2
Extr High	28.3	16.7	17.6	19.8	18.0
Extr Low	-7.2	1.3	-0.1	1.8	1.3
Precip	104.8	89.0	69.7	69.6	57.7
Days with Rain	14	20	21	20	21

Lake Temperature: Oct 2nd: 16 ° Oct 9th: 15 ° Oct 16th: 13 ° Oct 23rd:12 ° Oct 30th: 11 °

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Tue 15 Nov	00:48	1.5L	09:10	10.7H	15:07	8.5L	17:21	8.6H
Wed 16 Nov	01:31	1.9L	09:52	10.8H	16:16	8.1L	18:16	8.2H
Thu 17 Nov	02:16	2.4L	10:32	10.8H	17:14	7.5L	19:41	7.7H
Fri 18 Nov	03:05	3.2L	11:09	10.8H	18:00	6.6L	21:46	7.3H
Sat 19 Nov	04:00	4.2L	11:42	10.8H	18:40	5.5L	23:53	7.3H
Sun 20 Nov	05:02	5.3L	12:12	10.8H	19:19	4.2L		
Mon 21 Nov	01:41	8.0H	06:10	6.5L	12:41	10.8H	19:58	2.8L
Tue 22 Nov	03:09	8.9H	07:19	7.5L	13:08	10.8H	20:37	1.5L
Wed 23 Nov	04:17	9.8H	08:23	8.2L	13:37	10.9H	21:18	0.4L
Thu 24 Nov	05:14	10.5H	09:23	8.8L	14:10	10.9H	21:59	-0.2L
Fri 25 Nov	06:05	11.0H	10:23	9.2L	14:45	10.8H	22:43	-0.5L
Sat 26 Nov	06:54	11.3H	11:24	9.4L	15:25	10.5H	23:27	-0.3L
Sun 27 Nov	07:41	11.4H	12:31	9.3L	16:08	10.1H		
Mon 28 Nov	00:12	0.2L	08:28	11.5H	13:44	9.0L	16:55	9.6H
Tue 29 Nov	00:58	1.0L	09:12	11.4H	15:00	8.6L	17:48	8.9H
Wed 30 Nov	01:43	2.0L	09:55	11.3H	16:16	7.9L	18:55	8.2H
Thu 01 Dec	02:29	3.2L	10:35	11.2H	17:24	7.1L	20:37	7.5H
Fri 02 Dec	03:16	4.5L	11:11	10.9H	18:18	6.2L	22:51	7.2H
Sat 03 Dec	04:08	5.8L	11:43	10.7H	19:00	5.3L		
Sun 04 Dec	01:19	7.5H	05:12	7.0L	12:10	10.4H	19:36	4.5L
Mon 05 Dec	03:13	8.3H	06:32	7.9L	12:32	10.1H	20:09	3.6L
Tue 06 Dec	04:17	9.1H	07:48	8.6L	12:51	9.9H	20:39	2.9L
Wed 07 Dec	05:00	9.7H	08:52	9.0L	13:05	9.8H	21:08	2.2L
Thu 08 Dec	05:35	10.1H	09:45	9.2L	13:20	9.7H	21:37	1.8L
Fri 09 Dec	06:04	10.4H	10:31	9.3L	13:42	9.7H	22:06	1.4L
Sat 10 Dec	06:32	10.6H	11:13	9.3L	14:14	9.6H	22:38	1.1L
Sun 11 Dec	07:00	10.7H	11:57	9.2L	14:53	9.5H	23:11	1.0L
Mon 12 Dec	07:30	10.9H	12:44	9.0L	15:38	9.3H	23:47	1.1L
Tue 13 Dec	08:02	11.1H	13:36	8.7L	16:29	9.1H		
Wed 14 Dec	00:25	1.5L	08:34	11.2H	14:30	8.2L	17:28	8.7H
Thu 15 Dec	01:04	2.1L	09:06	11.3H	15:24	7.6L	18:40	8.2H

Take a Hike!

by Robin Massey

Wow, is Fall ever a gorgeous time of year to get out and about. No fear of getting sunburned, sunstroked or sun-baked! Does that justify our seasonal change a little bit for you?

For November's monthly hiking fieldtrip our group chose to go up the hill from Mill Bay to Rat Lake. I must say that the Deer Park residents really do have an amazing network of trails to explore, that's for sure. And, for those who are unaware of this hidden beauty, it is fairly easy to find. From the Trans Hwy heading south from Mill Bay, take a right on Frayne Road and then left on Benko Road. Follow around a bend or two and take the first right (gravel road) up until you reach the yellow gate. Walk past the gate and continue on the left upwards path(s). You will eventually come across a sign that says Rat Lake on the right hand side. Go that way to your left over the bridge and you are well on your way to a peaceful haven.

The Rat Lake loop trail is a truly magical place surrounded by amazing trees, creeks, and cute little wooden walkways so you won't get sucked

down during the muddy season. There was an incredible effort put into creating and maintaining this loop, and our group really appreciates it!

It is one of the shorter hikes in the area, taking a mere 45 minutes from start to finish... depending on how often you stop to sip in nature. The trails are an easy to moderate level, and I only throw in the moderate due to the bit of an incline right after the entrance gate. Rat Lake loop can be done pretty much any time of the year but be aware that some trails do have the tendency to get a little mucky during certain times of the year. As always also remember that you are in bear and cougar country. We have seen bear evidence in these particular parts, so bring friends – especially of the K9 variety – the more the merrier.

One thing we pondered whilst on

this excursion was the source of its name, why it is called 'Rat Lake'? Hmm... Well if there were any rats we didn't see them or perhaps the seven dogs we accompanied scared

them (and other creatures) off!

Robin Massey plays on various trails in Cowichan Valley with her hiking group The Iron Butts. www.theomtree.com



Some Amazing Things Appear on Shawnigan Lake

By Graham Ross-Smith

Just as birdwatchers over time get to see many types of birds, lakewatchers at Shawnigan get to see many types of water craft, some of them quite rare and exotic such as amphibious cars, large amphibious fixed-wing aircraft, amphibious helicopters like Sea Kings and even motor-powered rafts with tropical style huts and man-made palm trees. In late October, this lakewatcher's attention was drawn to the noise of a strange sounding engine at the Recreation Road launch site.

It was a small, two-person, hovercraft that was built by Willem Boelman over the past two years in his West Vancouver garage. It is small enough to be towed behind a car or truck and can reach a top speed of 75 kilometres an hour. The hovercraft was just completed this fall and was launched at the lake for "sea trials" in order to identify any problems. A few were found and some fine-tuning will follow.

There are several reasons that Shawnigan Lake was chosen for this launch. One is that Willem's good friend, George Kohorst, lives at the



lake on Recreation Road. Moreover, it is easy to access the lake and fresh water, being less corrosive than salt water, is a kinder environment for such a high-tech craft.

Willem is a logistics expert and a designer of very large "hover barges."

His reason for designing and building this small hovercraft was to provide a machine that could do the work of a helicopter in the far north at much less cost and greater safety and reliability. His daughter is a scientist who pilots choppers up on the "north slope."

Willem says that his hovercraft can do much of the work done by helicopters and for only \$10 per hour instead of the \$1,500 required to operate a helicopter. Unfortunately, hovercraft were recently banned from the north slope because the US navy took one of their 4,000 horse-power hovercraft onto the tundra and did enormous damage to the top soil. Willem's hovercraft is too small to do any such damage. It remains to be seen if this craft will ever operate in the far north.

The hovercraft is powered by a 3 cylinder diesel from a Smart Car. It is 70 horse-power and travels at 3,000 rpm. The craft is driven forward by a variable-pitch propeller mounted at the stern. A heavy-duty centrifugal fan provides the cushion of air needed to lift it off the ground. The wood components of the craft are Russian aircraft plywood and Honduras mahogany.

Yes, lake watching at Shawnigan is always fun and interesting, but seldom better than the day that Willem and George put their hovercraft on the lake.

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Focus Flashback

By Alan Edkins

Halloween of 1957 was cold, wet and windy as I recall but there were several fires and places to gather for the hobgoblins to hang out and be cool!

One must remember that at this time in the 1950's duck-tailed hair-do's and setting gel and vaseline were used in large amounts to keep the guys' hair in place and this, in turn, had two young men of that time and place devising a trick to be played on a person, or persons, unknown to be randomly selected that night. The trick was a paper bag filled with hair gel coloured brown through a generous addition of water based paint and mixed thoroughly. This bag was then attached to a slender but strong invisible fishing line and the whole assembly measured and tied with care to the lowest branch of the fir tree which hung over the Old Victoria Road just 100 yds past the Tait residence.



The devious plan was to have one of them on the next branch over to gauge the time to let the package swing down in a precise and calculated arc to catch a certain person who was known to be cycling to the village that night to attend the bonfire in the school grounds behind Dougan's garage. The wait was on and, just as the daylight was almost gone, the lone cyclist was spied pedalling furiously on his one speed bicycle heading for the village. The bomb aimer crouched down and prepared to let fly as the critical moment approached. The other one was in the ditch beside the road to signal when a certain spot was reached to let the missile go !

A hand was waved and the bomb aimer let fly

Splat! a perfect hit and the cyclist was nailed firmly in the chest, wobbled a bit and came to a very quick stop and leaped off his bicycle. To the utter dismay of the two, it was not the person they thought it would be but indeed the father of the bomb aimer himself !!!!! Both the boys tried to make a quick exit but sadly there was enough light left to identify them. They were called back to the site and after a severe tongue lashing spent the rest of the night cleaning off the soaped windows of the village and restoring toppled street signs under the scrutiny of the lone RCMP member stationed at Shawnigan until the festivities died down. Then both received a swat on the butt and were sent home!

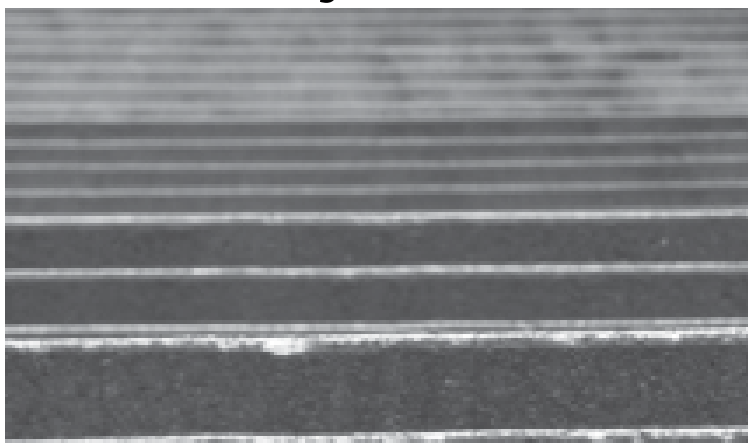
In those days a swat on the butt from someone other than your parents was not as big a thing as it is now and regardless to say when the other young man got home and found out that his father had been called, it transpired later that week he had his first crew cut and lost his cool hairdo to remind him of the dangers in the trick that they sprang on the wrong person.

My question is this... is there anyone left from that era who might hazard a guess as to who the two young men were ?

Also, does anyone recall the Halloween when unknown persons exploded 2 sticks(so I heard after the fact) of stumping powder off on the raft around the West side of the Lake, South of the government wharf around Webbs and Hepburns old places ? There were only about a dozen houses at that time on the West side of the Lake.

Alan grew up at Shawnigan

What is it? Where is it? Why is it?



First correct answer sent to:
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Now this is funny . . . !

Be sure to watch "America's Funniest Home Videos" on December 11.

Believe it or not there is a **Shawnigan** connection!!
You won't want to miss it...

WHAT IS IT? CONTEST WINNER – October Issue



Congratulations to What is it?

Contest Winner

John Middleton had the most correct answer for our October Where is it? What is it? Contest. The picture is of an abandoned concrete and iron "piston" or "hammer" from a large pile driver that operated on the lake. It is located on the water's edge at "Old Mill" Park. John wins two specialty coffees from Moziro's.

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ABOUT THE FOCUS

The Shawnigan Focus is an independent, local, non-profit publication, produced by the volunteer Focus team. The opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors, not the paper. Shawnigan Focus endeavours to inform; promote harmony and involvement in the community; and interest a broad cross-section of the residents of Shawnigan Lake

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SINGALONG HANDEL'S MESSIAH IN SHAWNIGAN

Halleluja! The Civic Orchestra of Victoria takes its 13th annual Singalong Messiah to Shawnigan Lake School Chapel on Sunday, December 11 at 3:00 pm. Guest conductor Peter Butterfield brings a fresh baroque energy to G.F. Handel's beloved oratorio, along with his 50-voice Victoria Philharmonic Choir, an auditioned ensemble which is becoming known for its performances of major 18th century works.

Rather than standing at the front, the choristers will sit in the church benches and sing along with the audience.

There is a roster of wonderful young soloists for this performance. Matthew Leighton, Treble Soloist, is a grade eight student in his fourth season with Vancouver Voices Youth and his seventh season with the Vancouver Bach Children's Chorus. He has also performed as soloist with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in the Lord of the Rings Symphony. He will appear only in the Shawnigan concert, not at the subsequent performance in Victoria.

Erin Ronningen (alto) is

a classical voice major at the University of Victoria and studies with Anne Grimm. Josh Lovell was the first tenor to be featured at Symphony Splash, when he was 18. VPC

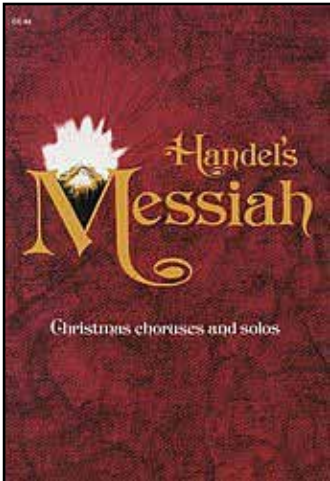
first performed with Alex Granat, baritone, when he sang arias from Bach's St. Matthew Passion at the Victoria Conservatory of Music.

If you have your own score, please bring it along. There will be some scores available to borrow. Non-singers are also

welcome to just come and enjoy.

There is another performance, with expanded orchestra, on Wednesday evening, December 14th, 7:00 pm, at Alix Goolden Hall in Victoria, with soprano Mary-Ellen Rayner.

Tickets are \$20/\$15 students and seniors, and will be available by mid-November from: Valley Vines to Wines (Mill Bay), Island Pharmacy (Shawnigan Village) and Volume 1 Bookstore (Duncan). For information on Victoria outlets, please visit vpchoir.ca or civicorchestraofvictoria.org



"Dance for the Children" another success!

By Brian Jackson

Once again the residents and businesses of South Cowichan and Victoria came together to help make the upcoming Christmas better for many local area families, especially the children. On October 8th, a dinner dance was held at the West Arm Grill to raise money for the "Dance for the Children" charity. It was a great evening with many friends, new and old, getting together to enjoy music, dancing, socializing and taking home one or more of the numerous items bought at the silent auction.

This annual event was started several years ago in memory of Ralph Cleasby. After his tragic death February 10, 2009, Craig Partridge and John Cardy decided to put on this dance in honour of Ralph and his known generosity. To date, over \$30,000.00 has been raised to make Christmas Day easier for many local families. Many thanks go to the supporters who donated toward this worthwhile event and special thanks should also go to Terry Eden and the C.M.S. Food bank for their time and effort put forth each year to co-ordinate the gathering and distribution of gifts for Christmas Day.



Ralph Cleasby

CHRISTMAS LIGHT UP

It's twenty-one nights before Christmas and you are invited to the Annual Christmas Light Up in the Village Square. Come join your neighbours on Sunday, December 4th from 4:30 pm to 7 pm. This festive time brings people together in the tradition of family fun. This is the sixth year that Shawnigan residents have enjoyed this popular and ever-growing event that is sponsored by the Shawnigan Lake Business Association.

This year, the entertainment begins with the First Annual Shawnigan Lake Christmas Toy Drive Parade of decorated vehicles travelling from the Mill Bay Centre. Enjoy the fun activities - a visit and photo with Santa Claus, cookie decorating, face painting, making tree decorations. You can also make a fancy and festive hat for the Christmas hat parade and join in the road hockey game. Munch on a hot dog and savour a cup of spicy hot apple cider or wander over to Moziro's for a mug of tasty hot chocolate. Carolling of well-known tunes will be heard throughout the Square. To enrich the experience of giving, your donations of toys and food items to the local Food Bank will be collected below the brightly lit Christmas tree. So - dress warmly and come and join in the festivities - we look for-

providence farm Christmas Craft Fair

Providence Farm's country Christmas Craft Fair, will be on Saturday, Dec. 3, from 9 am to 3 pm, featuring local hand-crafted items, Farm-made products, a lunchroom, baked items, raffles, professional portraits with Santa, hayrides, and children's activities. Held mainly in the historic Providence House at 1843 Tzouhalem Rd., this year the event will extend through the gardens and into the St. Ann's Garden Club building, home to the Farm's day program for seniors. Admission is by a donation to the local food bank. Operated by a non-profit society for over 30 years, Providence Farm provides training, employment, and horticultural therapy for people with mental health issues, brain injuries, and developmental disabilities. Call 250-746-4204, or go to www.providence.bc.ca,

SLBA Member Profile

www.shawniganlakemuseum.com

Shawnigan Lake Museum
By Lori Treloar - Curator



A local history museum provides a community with the opportunity to preserve and celebrate its unique history.

Local history is not always valued - because it is local. We do not always notice, or appreciate, what is around us. Children often grow up believing that nothing ever happens in their village, town or city. They can't wait to grow up and move to somewhere more exciting.

By examining the details of the history of our community, we can learn what was meaningful to the lives of others before us. In the words of Aristotle, "If you would understand anything, observe its beginning and development". Time and again, we discover that the previous experiences in a community are important in the present as well. The details - objects, personal histories, memories and images from local places are important. These details can be preserved in many forms - physical objects, photographs, the

written word and oral or video recordings.

A museum acts as the caretaker of these details for the benefit of the community. A museum has the responsibility to preserve and promote the history of an area.

Shawnigan Lake has a local history museum. The Shawnigan Lake Historical Society, incorporated in 1977, worked diligently for several years to open a museum. When the old fire hall became available, in the heart of the Shawnigan Lake Village, it was the perfect fit. The museum had its first open house in 1983.

The Shawnigan Lake Historical Society celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2007. The collection has grown; the building has had further modifications; many dedicated volunteers have come and gone, but the original purpose is still the same: to preserve and celebrate the history of Shawnigan Lake; and to provide a permanent repository for information, records and objects of historical and cultural value associated with the area. Ideally, the museum should be an integral part of our community so that we do not, through indifference, lose the history that makes Shawnigan Lake special.

Contact us by email at: shawniganlakemuseum@shaw.ca or call 743-8675.

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